



employer advisor

Utah Department of Workforce Services

FALL 2016

Published quarterly by the Utah Department of Workforce Services • jobs.utah.gov

In this issue:

- Employer Cooperation is Key to Ensuring Accurate Benefit Payments
- Benefit Payment Control (BPC) Unit
- Utah Rural Summit
- Utah's UI Program Highlighted at Congressional Hearing

Employer Cooperation is Key to Ensuring Accurate Benefit Payments

A priority of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program is to ensure that benefits are paid only to those who are eligible. We rely heavily on the cooperation of the employers who complete timely and accurate wage audits. These wage audits (form 613) provide a measure of weekly wages earned by the claimant while filing for UI benefits, which is compared against the claimant's report of weekly earnings. Common causes of overpayments detected through these audits include:

- Claimants failing to report their work and accurate earnings, including tips, commission and separation pay.
- Claimants reporting when paid rather than when earned.
- Claimants reporting net earnings rather than gross earnings.

During 2015, Utah paid \$174 million in benefits. Thanks to employer participation, Utah's Benefit Payment Control (BPC) unit resolved more than 27,000 audits, which resulted in the detection of nearly \$3 million in overpayments caused by claimant misreporting. BPC also received tips regarding possible claimant fraud from employers and the general public, resulting in the detection of nearly \$250,000 in overpayments.

Responding to UI wage audits and contacting us with helpful tips of improper activities make a substantial contribution to protecting the UI Trust Fund. To view information on the prosecution of fraud or to report suspected fraud, visit:

<http://jobs.utah.gov/ui/Fraud/uifraud>

Benefit Payment Control (BPC) Unit

The BPC unit includes specialists and investigators tasked with protecting the state's Unemployment Trust Fund. They do this by carefully reviewing wage audits, investigating tips and leads, monitoring for fraudulent claim

filing and prosecuting egregious cases. Their primary focus is program integrity. In fiscal year 2015, they achieved a quality rating of 95.8% and resolved 96.7% of investigations within 21 days.



Back Row (l-r): Issa Moursal, Allen Nelson, Robert Kelley, Jeff LeSueur, Alyson Grant, DeeAnn Shumway
Front Row (l-r): Josh Hawkins, Darci Burnett, Jeanne Miller, Melissa Schneller, Hari Subba, Marlene Lindsey, Paula Bowen, Becky Kalaher



Post your jobs online here:

jobs.utah.gov/employer

Get occupational wage data here:

jobs.utah.gov/wi



Utah Rural Summit

The 29th Annual Utah Rural Summit took place on August 4-5, 2016, in Cedar City. The annual summit brings together businesses, local, county and state government officials, nonprofits and other interested parties to address rural economic development. The summit's goal to develop rural Utah's economy allows attendees to network, learn of new opportunities and leave with a renewed focus on rural Utah. Keynote addresses this year included: The Art of Branding and how to create a brand for rural cities; economic

development in Rural Utah; The State of Rural Utah; and, census statistics and how rural city population's change in Rewriting the Rural Narrative. Breakout sessions addressed Utah energy and mining, the aerospace industry and filming in Utah.

To see what services Workforce Services can offer for your business or to contact one of our local Workforce Development Specialists across the state, visit: jobs.utah.gov/employer/solutions.html

Utah's UI Program Highlighted at Congressional Hearing

The U.S. House Ways and Means subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing on Sept., 7, 2016, entitled "Unemployment Insurance: An Overview of the Challenges and Strengths of Today's System." As part of the hearing, Utah's Unemployment Insurance Division Director Michelle Beebe testified about the successes within Utah's program and the current challenges states are facing.

"Utah is one of the top states in the country when it comes to having low duration and exhaustion rates, and has one of the healthiest Unemployment Trust Funds," said Beebe. "Even with our success in re-employment, there are challenges every state is experiencing regarding funding constraints and the partnership with the federal government. States need flexibility to continue along the path of sustainability and innovation."

The purpose of the hearing was to examine the program integrity, trust fund solvency and re-employment strategies within the Unemployment Insurance system. Beebe was the last of four witnesses to testify before the subcommittee, which included Florida's director of Economic Opportunity, an employer and an advocate organization.

"Utah's Unemployment Insurance Program is a positive example of how the system can protect workers and



employers, which helps keep our economy strong," said Jon Pierpont, executive director of the Department of Workforce Services. "Having our Unemployment Insurance director asked to testify before Congress is an honor and opportunity to help the federal government understand how a state can be strategic and innovative."

You can watch Ms. Beebe's [oral testimony](#) and read her [written testimony](#), which were submitted to the subcommittee on Sept. 7, 2016.